



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 9

75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

February 26, 1998

Mr. Lance McMahan
California Environmental Protection Agency - DTSC
10151 Croydon Way, Suite 3
Sacramento, CA 95827

Re: Potential for Release of Perchlorate at China Lake Naval Air Warfare Center

Dear Mr. McMahan,

As we discussed on the phone on February 11, monitoring for the potential release of perchlorate to the soil and groundwater is warranted at the China Lake Naval Air Warfare Center. The enclosed briefing paper on Perchlorate in Region 9, along with the table and map of the known occurrence of groundwater contamination from perchlorate releases, describes the concern for the threatened contamination of water resources by this highly soluble and persistent component of solid rocket fuel.

EPA has recently received a list of Primary Domestic Ammonium Perchlorate Users for Propulsion Applications prepared at our request by the coordinator of perchlorate issues for the Armed Services and NASA (enclosed). China Lake is included on that list and is the only California facility listed for which we have no information on perchlorate monitoring. All the other five California facilities listed, including the jet propulsion lab at Edwards Air Force Base and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, have documented groundwater contamination of perchlorate. You will note that there are six other sources of perchlorate groundwater contamination in California which were not listed in the Air Force's preliminary search.

In our conversation, you mentioned other potential solid rocket fuel manufacturing or research facilities, particularly the Naval facility in Sunnyvale. If this or any other facility did handle perchlorate-based rocket fuel, EPA would recommend monitoring for possible perchlorate contamination.

Thank you for your attention to the issue of perchlorate releases. Please feel free to contact me at (415) 744-2248 if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin P. Mayer".

Kevin P. Mayer, H-7-2
Superfund Project Manager

Enclosures
cc: on next page

CC:

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